Truth the ſtrongeſt habitation for all the People of God.

Being a Declaration and warning to the Nation of ſome of the late ſuffering, inflicted upon the Servants of God, now Priſoners in Northampton *Goale, for Worſhipping God, and keeping our Conſciences clear in his ſight, ſhewing who are the late cruel and unmercyful Men in this work of Perſecution, which may be ſeen as followeth.*

Whiting's Cat: p. 176.

O Thou County of *Northampton* it was lately declared unto thee that thou would make thy ſelf a ſhame unto the Nation, in that thou wert the firſt that, after the great Viſitation this laſt year, began to put in execution thy late unmercyful law to baniſh and ſentence thy innocent Inhabitants for Worſhipping the Lord; and as Judge *Reinsford* ſaid at the Seſſions holden at *Northampton* in the 10*th*. Moneth, that becauſe of the Plague that was ſo hot at *Michaels* Seſſions before, he could not go on with his work to ſentence the innocent, yet when the Plague was taken off in the 10 Moneth following then he ſaid he would go on with his work; and there ſentenced one *John Treſſon*, and four more, and ſince the ſame Judge hath ſentenced two more at *Witſon* Seſſions, and there one the bench complained much againſt the Juſtices becauſe they had let two years ſlip away, and had not fitted no more of thoſe people called *Quakers* for Baniſhment, and ſaid that the cauſe of the Plague being ſo great in the Nation was becauſe they had not put in execution that law that would have baniſhed them all out of the Land: Oh the darkneſs and blindneſs that is fallen upon ſuch Judges, Rulers and Prieſts that cannot, or rather will not ſee what is the cauſe of Gods Judgments being ſo heavy upon this Nation and People at this day, though every one that hath their eyes open in the leaſt meaſure may run and read what is the cauſe [illegible] will but take notice how the Lord hath followed [illegible] righteous Judgments ever ſince they have endeavoured

vowed to root out the seed which the Lord hath raised in this Northern Island, as *Jeremiah* foretold, *chap.* 23.

And now once more O Nation and Country this we lay before thee, that those amongst thee whose Consciences is not quite seared may see the evil that they have done, and that they are a doing at this day, which hath caused the Righteous God to whet his glittering Sword, and to bend his mighty Bow to strike and to shoot in secret, and to lay upon heaps thousands, and to smite the Nation with fearfulness and trembling, and with a great and mighty consumption to fulfill upon *England* and upon her Inhabitants what he hath decreed and declared in the Scriptures of Truth, that so the seed that he hath raised may grow and encrease, and may fill the whole Earth, and that it may get the victory, and that the new Heaven and new Earth wherein shall dwell Righteousness, may appear amongst the sons of Men, and Christ Jesus the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, rule all the Nations upon Earth, of whose Dominion there never shall be end.

O Nation of *England*, thou Northern Island of all the Nations of the Earth, the Lord after a long night of Apostasie hath first made choice of thee to raise his seed from amongst thy Inhabitants and to manifest his mighty living power in them, and to put his Everlasting Gospel into their Mouths, and to cause them to run to and fro to preach his Everlasting Gospel unto the sons of Men, and hath redeemed them from the earth to go on his Message to gather his Elect from the four Winds of Heaven and they have faithfully declared his Everlasting Gospel, and the Lord hath mightily prospered his work in their hands, and hath made them his Instruments to raise and to awaken his seed in thousands and ten thousands, not only in these Northern Islands but in divers other Countries, and that in a few years, and all this is the Lords doing, & let him have all the praise, & it is marvelous in our eyes.

But oh Nation of *England* though thou much boasted thy self that thou of all other Nations was the most Reformed in the Christian Religion, and thou eryed much the Temple of the Lord is amongst us, we have the greatest learned Divines, and the purest Worship of God, and the nearest to the Primitive times of all other Nations; yet what hath now been found in thee though thou thus said, yet thou hast drunk as deep of the Whore's Cup as any other Nation, and thy Rulers, Priests and People have rose up against the Lord and his People, and those Rulers that first rose

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up againſt the manifeſtation of God in his people here, the Lord cut them off by his Righteous Judgments and brought in you that now rule, who then promiſed that none ſhould be moleſted or troubled for his Religion in caſe he lived peaceably in the Nation, but to this day how hath the peaceable people of the Lord been moleſted, troubled, impriſoned, fined, ſentenced, and baniſhed from the land of their Nativity, their Goods ſpoiled, their Families torn a pieces, and expoſed to utter ruine, becauſe they could not worſhip with you according to the precepts of of Men, and ever ſince you who now are in power have thus perſecuted and abuſed the Lords innocent people; how hath the Lords mercy appeared towards you in ſending of this oppreſſed people to you, to forewarn you of the evil day and miſery that is now come & coming upon you and the Nation, that it may now be truly ſaid of *England* as it was once ſaid of *Jeruſalem*, Oh *England*, *England*, thou that killeſt and baniſheth, and impriſoneth the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them that I have ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thee together as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but oh *England* thou wouldeſt not; we could wiſh that it might not be truly ſaid now unto thee that thy houſes are like to be made unto thee deſolate, for ſome years after you (who are now in power) continued perſecuting and abuſing of the Lords own people that fears and obeys him; take notice how did the Lord ſmite thee with plagues one after another, in deſtroying of thy herds of Cattle, and in cauſing the curſe to ſmite the Earth, and to blaſt the fruits of the Earth, and in cauſing overflowing raines and tempeſtuous winds to go beyound their bounds to the impoveriſhing of many thouſands, but for all this few regarded thoſe the works of the Lord, but proceeded higher in perſecuting and abuſing the ſervants of the Lord, and would not take notice what was the cauſe of Gods Judgments coming ſo upon the Land, but thus rebelling againſt the Lord they began to do as *Pharoah*, hardening their hearts in making a law to root out thoſe called *Quakers* in this Nation of *England*, and that none ſhould meet together above the number of four to Worſhip the Lord, but in that manner, time and place that they (the Rulers) ſhould preſcribe.

But oh Nation now in this day of thy diſtreſs conſider, that when thou wert grown to this height in wickedneſs as to root out by a law the ſeed which the Lord had raiſed in thee, then did the

Lord appear ſignally againſt thee, and the very week that thou firſt baniſhed that faithful ſervant of the Lord *Edward Bruſh* from his habitation, that ſame week and near to his houſe did the Lord ſend down his plague, which firſt began within the walls of thy chief City, and how it continued and made deſolate, thou yet may'ſt remember; then thou may'ſt remember that at the ſame time the Lord raiſed up enemies to engage againſt thee, threatning to ſmite thee with his two edged ſword, and yet for all this few in thee regarded the works of the Lord, neither would believe what was the cauſe why the Lord ſent his plagues upon this land and people, then how wert thou troubled to get any to carry thoſe the people of the Lord into Baniſhment, after thy Judges had cauſed them to be ſentenced, and thou would not take notice that this thy ſin in cauſing the Innocent to be carryed out of their native land was great, that it came to be hated of moſt Men, ſo that few Seamen, Merchants or Marriners were found that would either buy or tranſport thoſe thy Captives; but at laſt thou taking no notice yet of this the work of the Lord againſt thee, then thou endeavoured that none bound for any of thoſe Plantations ſhould have liberty to paſs out of their Harbours untill they had engaged to the Rulers to carry ſome *Quakers* into Exile, then ſuch Men that feared Man more then the Lord, and looked at their own private gain more then the good and welfare of their Neighbours, they conſented to carry them into Baniſhment; but now let your eyes open but a little and you may ſee the works of the Lord and how his hands were ſtretched out againſt thoſe Seamen, Marriners and Merchants that would undertake that wicked work ſome of the Maſters of the Ships the Lord cut off by his Judgements, others were taken when they came near home by their Enemies, and themſelves made Priſoners in their Enemies land, and their Goods and Ship quite loſt, and others impriſoned at home as a juſt judgment of the Lord againſt them, and others that had their Conſciences awakened to ſee the evil of that work and durſt not for Conſcience ſake carry the Innocent into Baniſhment, when they had them put aboard their Ships, how hath the Lord proſpered them in their Voyage and came ſafe home again, and this was the Lords own work and it is marvelous in our eyes; and the other doing wickedly, and fearing not the Lord they were trapped in the works of their own hands, and thus the Lord coms to be known by his executing of his righteous Judgments &

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his mighty power is now made manifeſt in deliveriug of his people that truſt in him, and in the confounding of all thoſe that ſeek to oppoſe his mighty work that he hath begun in this Iſland; and now many are there in this Land that ſees and believes that the cauſe why God puniſheth this Nation, is, becauſe of the great and grievous perſecution that is inflicted to this day upon thoſe that fears the Lord, and becauſe the Rulers will not let Gods people have free liberty to Worſhip the Lord in ſpirit and in truth, as his good ſpirit ſhall lead and guide them; but they would force all people to Worſhip God after the preceepts and commandements of Men, which was a thing the Lord ever hated, and ever ſeverely puniſhed in any people in whom it was found.

But O *England* amongſt all thy Rulers and Prieſts where is the poor Man found who by his Wiſdom might ſave the City? or where is he that appears to ſtand in the gapp to turn away the wrath that is now coming upon thee? doth not thy falſe Prophets yet cry unto thee, and to thy Rulers, Perſecute ſtill and proſper, and if any *Michaiahs* appear to tell thee the truth from the Lord, what will become of thee if thou ſtill perſecute Gods people, and uſurps Gods throne [the Conſcience] doſt thou not ſerve them worſe at this day then *Ahab* did, thou caſts ſuch into Priſon, and there will allow them no bread, and others thou robs and ſpoiles, and others thou baniſheth for the exerciſe of their Conſciences toward the Lord; Oh how is thy ſhame come now upon thee by reaſon of thy ſin, muſt not ſhame cover thee for ever, except thou repent thou art like to become a ſhame to all Nations, who profeſſed thy ſelf to be a Reformed Nation, and ſaid that thou hadeſt the Scriptures, and ſaid that they are the word of God, and ought to be a rule for all, both Kings and People to walk by, and ſaiſt there is one God, and that he ought to be Worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth, and yet thou art found perſecuting of ſuch as walk according to Scripture, and art baniſhing, primeniring and ſpoiling of their Goods, becauſe they dare not act or ſwear contrary to the holy Scriptures.

O Nation, thou haſt had in antient time Rulers in thee, that have ſaid, the welfare of the People is above Law, and that no Man ought to be baniſhed from the Land of his Nativity, except for Treaſon and Fellony; but in *England* at this day, he that departeth from evil makes himſelf a prey, to ſuch Men that are of the devouring nature, and ſo wicked are ſome of thy Rulers, that

they will perſecute ſuch Men, as pray for them, and they will deſpitefully uſe them, that do good unto them, and notwithſtanding Gods Judgments are now ſo upon this Nation, that the Lord hath even ſtruck the hearts of Men with fear, and they are even at their wits ends; yet there is ſome of thy Rulers ſo deſperately wicked in this County of *Northampton*, that commit ſin even with greedineſs, at this time, as though there were no other way to ſtay Gods Judgments, but by provoking him more and more with their ſins, as one *Richard Raynsford*, and one *Henry Yelverton*, the one being called a Judge, the other a Juſtice, who now at this day exceeds moſt of the Rulers in *England*, in perſecuting, ſentencing and impriſoning of the Lords People, this *Henry Yelverton* having lately impriſoned *fifty eight* Perſons called *Quakers*, both Men and Women, ſome of them being big with Child, others having their little Infants ſucking at their Breaſts; and there ſhuting them all up together in the common Goal, in cloſe Roomes, the very heat of this laſt 4th. Month, and ſtill they continue, the number of 82. together; which were not the Lords mercy over this Mans cruelty, it could not have but proved infectious unto them. ſending them away by Cart and Wagon loads, to the Goal, and wiſhing the Officers to bring thoſe of under age, that they found at their Meeting, that ſo he might ſend them to the Houſe of Correction there to be whiped, and this as wild Bores out of the Forreſt, they ſeek to root out and deſtroy Gods heritage, and the mercy of this Man is very cruelty, for he ſpares none, as if he did think to merit and get into favour only by exerciſing his cruelty towards Gods ſervants, but for ſuch things doth and will the Lord plead with this Nation, and the day haſtneth that this Man ſhall bear his own burthen, for this Man hath lain ſtill all the while that other fierce Perſecuters acted their parts againſt the Innocent, and now when he ſees and hears that the dread of Gods Judgments are upon the whole Nation, and they now begin to ſee that the Lord hath provided them other work, then to perſecute and tranſport Gods People from amongſt them, and moſt Counties in *England*, and Magiſtrates, are made willing to be ſtill and be quiet, yet this *Henry Yelverton*, being one (as he ſaid) that made the Law to baniſh Gods People, hath now begun to make himſelf manifeſt, like *Buttler*, *Browne* and *Pentlowe*, and others of the Rulers, that God caſt out before theſe, whoſe names are yet an ill ſavour amongſt ſober people, being of the firſt that roſe up to

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perſecute the Servants of the Lord, when the *Lord* firſt brought them forth of the North Country, and in this County great things hath had their beginnings and ending, of late years, and we believe no Magiſtrates in their Right wits, will ever now follow this wicked Mans Example, but rather hate ſuch practiſes, which already thoſe Magiſtrates doth, that have ever been faithful to their King, and hazarded their lives and eſtates for him, and ſees that Perſecution brings no profit to the King, neither can it knit the hearts of his People unto Him, but on the contrary, brings dammage unto Him, and weakens the Nation, and cauſeth the wrath of God to be poured forth upon this Land; and we read that when there were but one *Acan* in the whole Hoſt of *Iſrael*, and that ſecretly did the thing that was evil in the ſight of the Lord, the whole Hoſt came to ſuffer, until the Man were found out, and the ſin confeſſed, and Judgment executed, and yet his ſin were not of ſo deep a dye, neither were it done ſo publickly, as this *Henry Yelverton* is at this day, to caſt into Priſon 82. upon heapes, as if he purpoſed to deſtroy them in this heat of Somer, and to take Maſters, Fathers, Children and Servants away from their habitation, not leaving them to gather in their fruits, that they have laboured for, nor to Till the Earth againſt another year, but ſets up an Abomination, that is like to make deſolate, many Families, and does like thoſe mad Men that the Prophet *Eſdras* ſpoke of ſhould ariſe, 2 of *Eſdras* 16. & 26. that ſhould be like mad Men, ſtill ſpoyling and deſtroying thoſe that fear the Lord, therefore if *Acan*'s ſin cauſed the whole Hoſt of *Iſrael* to ſuffer, well may this Mans wickedneſs, and the wickedneſs of ſuch like, (which is commited by a Law, and at ſuch a time as this, when it is ſaid, that Enemies are ready to invade us, and the Lords Judgments are upon the Nation, and Mens hearts fail them, for fear of thoſe things that they ſee are coming upon them) cauſe the Lord to withdraw his Power, and to let them fall before their Enemies, and ſo to prove the great troublers of *England* at this day.

Therefore O Nation, theſe things we who are ſufferers in this common Goal of *Northampton*, for the truth of the Lord; do ſpread theſe Lines before the Nation, that ſo, if it be not too late, the Nation may ſee what is the cauſe of Gods Judgments, lying ſo heavy upon this Land, and People and may ſee who hath been the Troublers of *England*, and how the Lord hath followed Perſecution at the very heeles, and all thoſe that have uſurped power

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over the Consciences of Gods People, and how this wicked man doth arise to carry on the Devils work in this County, joyning with a wicked young man called *Taufield*, *Mulshoe* of *Bingdon*, and one *Sanders* a drunken Priest of the same Town, and one *Henry Wallis* an old Turncoat, who in the late War were counted one of the greatest King Catchers in all the Town, and formerly caused a Priest there to be sequestred because he read the book of Common Prayer, being a deboyst drunkard, and one *Valentine Makernes*, whom it is said these Men hire to swear right or wrong at Sessions, and before this Justice to cause the innocent to suffer; and one *Christopher Coles* one who hath ever been an enemy to all appearance of truth, and a great persecuter; and that these Men when they come to read their shame may repent and cease doing wickedly, we put this to publick veiw, and not out of revenge but rather that the Nation in general may come to read what hath been the cause that the Lord hath and doth thus smite this Nation and People, but if they will not cease let them know this from the Lord they shall never prosper, but his Judgments shall more and more increase untill they become a hissing to all Nations, and we shall be clear of all their blood in that we have given them warning.

From the Prisoners in Northampton *Goal, who patiently suffer for Worshipping the Living God in Spirit and Truth. The first day of the fifth Moneth,* 1666.

THE END.